Assemblymembers Jim Beall, Jr., and Joe Coto
Special Education Legislative Forum
Public Comments and Recommendations
April 4, 2008

◆ Get the word out to legislators to not vote for the budget - PTA has developed a "Flunk the Budget Fridays" slogan and they visit legislators in their district on Fridays to tell them not to vote for the budget

◆ Reduce transportation costs

◆ Establish a method of sharing best practices

◆ Review and discuss ways to increase the pool of special education teachers through incentives and other strategies in an effort to address the critical shortage

◆ Develop a system for allowing special education teachers sabbaticals so that school districts retain them and they don't burn out

◆ Pass legislation that requires insurance companies to accept autism as a medical condition and they pay for needed services

◆ Bring back VLF

◆ Determine what is appropriate funding for special education

◆ Eliminate duplication of services and paperwork

◆ Provide for on-going training for Special Education teachers

◆ Change the credentialing program and provide a credential for autism

◆ Provide medical parity for health related autism programs

◆ Rework the IEP and implement a universal IEP that has classroom focus

◆ Develop and mandate a statewide universal IEP form in order to save individual school districts money associated with reproduction and translation costs and also to assist parents who move into a new school district

- Support family empowerment centers

- Develop a policy that states that districts can't have attorneys represent them if the family doesn't have an attorney, it'll save money for district and it assists families who can't afford legal representation

- Funding should follow the child

- Fund special education properly so it doesn't encroach on the general fund

- Provide translators or a repository for doing translations

- Provide early identification and treatment. Put money into pre-school, the earlier children are identified the better the chances of getting the child mainstreamed. Special services can be provided and enable the child to overcome difficulties before they enter 1st grade.

- Develop alternative resolution processes

- Support SB 1515 – which prohibits an educational provider from using chemical restraint or seclusion, except as indicated in the bill in certain situations. The bill requires an educational provider to conduct a debriefing after the use of behavioral restraint, and requires the educational provider to train staff annually in behavioral restraint.

- Provide assistance and support to help special education youngsters pass the high school exit exam

- Provide employment assistance programs for developmentally disabled so that they can be employable and contribute to society

- Provide flexible scheduling so child can get services before or after school and not be pulled from classes

- Recognize the value of physical education for students with disabilities

Additional Comments received on Comment Forms
(not already mentioned)

- Equalize education funding, eliminate discrepancy of funding caused by wealthier areas getting their property tax dollars to fund education

- Honor teachers and pay them more

- Require health insurance to cover cost of medicine for young adults who have behavioral or emotional problems and are transitioning from school to work.

- Team teach general education and special education to encourage inclusion

- Revise the California Modified Assessment to better meet the needs of students

- Provide more opportunities to mainstream students with autism

- Allow children in special education to enroll and participate in summer school

- Examine the consequences and consider whether there should be exemptions to the mandate that prohibits a teacher with out a special education credential to substitute for more than 20 days for the assigned special education teacher who is it out for an extended or permanent leave of absence

- Revise policies so that special education students have same opportunities as other students and parents don't have to fight for access